

The Holocaust

What does the word HOLOCAUST mean?

Any mass slaughter or reckless destruction of life.

What does it mean when we are talking about WWII?

The systematic mass slaughter of European Jews in Nazi concentration camps during World War II

Why did the HOLOCAUST happen?

The Nazis, who came to power in Germany in January 1933, believed that Germans were "racially superior" and that the Jews, deemed "inferior," were an alien threat to the so-called German racial community.

During the era of the Holocaust, German authorities also targeted other groups because of their perceived "racial inferiority":

- * Roma (Gypsies)
- * The disabled,
- * Slavic peoples (Poles, Russians, and others).

Other groups were persecuted on political, ideological, and behavioral grounds, among them

- * Communists
- * Socialists
- * Jehovah's Witnesses
- * Homosexuals.

In 1933, the Jewish population of Europe stood at over nine million. Most European Jews lived in countries that Nazi Germany would occupy or influence during World War II.

By 1945, the Germans and their collaborators killed nearly two out of every three European Jews as part of the "Final Solution," the Nazi policy to murder the Jews of Europe.

Although Jews, whom the Nazis deemed a priority danger to Germany, were the primary victims of Nazi racism, other victims included some 200,000 Roma (Gypsies).

At least 200,000 mentally or physically disabled patients, mainly Germans, living in institutional settings, were murdered in the so-called Euthanasia Program.

In the early years of the Nazi regime, the National Socialist government established concentration camps to detain real and imagined political and ideological opponents.

Increasingly in the years before the outbreak of war, SS and police officials incarcerated Jews, Roma, and other victims of ethnic and racial hatred in these camps.

To concentrate and monitor the Jewish population as well as to facilitate later deportation of the Jews, the Germans and their collaborators created ghettos, transit camps, and forced-labor camps for Jews during the war years























Between 1941 and 1944, Nazi German authorities deported millions of Jews from Germany, from occupied territories, and from the countries of many of its Axis allies to ghettos and to killing centers, often called extermination camps, where they were murdered in specially developed gassing facilities.









Shooting Wall



Mass Grave



Mass Grave

In the final months of the war, SS guards moved camp inmates by train or on forced marches, often called “death marches,” in an attempt to prevent the Allied liberation of large numbers of prisoners.








The Children



Over 1 Million children under the age of 16 died during the Holocaust.

Many of them spent their whole lives in the Ghettos or in Concentration Camps

Survivors Remember

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